

THE TERMS.

We again call the attention of our readers to the following extract from the "Terms" of the *Era*:

"Every subscriber receiving his subscription, and sending two new subscribers, shall have the three copies of five dollars."

A subscriber sends us five dollars for three new subscribers, and thinks he carries out the spirit of the proposition. Undoubtedly. A postmaster, not a subscriber, also sends us three new subscribers on the same terms, presuming that we will not object. Certainly not. The only difference between these cases, and those in which subscribers pay their money to agents, is, that in the former the subscribers consent to themselves the benefit of the commission. This does not interfere with our regular agents, but rather helps them, by multiplying our readers, and thus extending the field for their operations.

We hope each subscriber, as his subscription runs out, will be so kind, by a little exertion, he may secure two new subscribers, and supply himself and them for five dollars.

THE NATIONAL ERA.

WASHINGTON, AUGUST 23, 1849.

NOTICE.

Mr. CLISTON, who we are informed, has been travelling through the State of Indiana, collecting subscriptions for this paper, is not authorized to act as agent or receive subscriptions for the *Era*.

ANNE JONES and other contributors will receive attention when the editor, who has left Washington for a little recreation, shall have returned.

POSTPONEMENT.

DR. BAILEY: I regret to state that serious indisposition, added to the pressure of a prior engagement, will deprive me from the pleasure of meeting your readers, in the *Era* this week. Very soon, however, I hope to enjoy that honor.

Respectfully yours,
EDWARD D. E. SOUTHWORTH.
August 21, 1849.

The *Wisconsin Free Democrat*, of the 5th inst. has conferred a favor upon the editor and proprietor of the *National Era*, by exposing some false and slanderous imputations cast upon him by a paper called the *Mineral Point Tribune*. We are also indebted to the *Free Democrat* for the publication of the Prospectus of the *Era*, by way of vindicating our motives and principles before the good people of Wisconsin.

THE ROME CONVENTIONS.

It will be seen, by reference to another column, that the Conventions of the Free Soil and Hunker parties of New York, at Rome, in that State, have failed to agree upon terms of union. We confess that we had not been sanguine of success in the attempt at union. The leaders of the Hunkers are too deeply committed to the doctrines of the Nicholson Letter, to make an open recantation; and the Free-Soilers, we are proud to say, would listen to no proposition for compromising principle. The rank and file of the Hunkers are, doubtless, sound upon the subject of slavery, and, unless we mistake the signs of the times, they will abandon their leaders, whose pride of consistency prevented them from receding from their unfortunate position. On the whole, we shall indulge few regrets over the failure to compromise.

AMENDMENTS.

We hold that the Federal Constitution ought to be so amended as to place the election of a President in the hands of the people, directly, and to limit his term of office to four years, making him thereafter ineligible; and to be still further amended so as to give to the people of the several States the election of their Senators and Representatives, changing the term of office from six to four years.—*Prospectus of the National Era*.

Important as are those two amendments proposed by the *Era*, it is somewhat strange that an editor, who once took so high a stand in favor of the right, cannot see the necessity of having the moral courage to propose other and far more important amendments to the Federal Constitution. The extract which we give above is from the Prospectus of the *Era* for 1840. Finding it to be an important position, we will in the *Era* regard the two proposed amendments as the only ones of importance, if not the sole ones that need to be made. We say we think strange, because Dr. Bailey regards the Constitution as pro-slavery in several of its parts. That its compromises, especially the slave representation and electoral college, are strong prop to the system of slavery in the States, no one can successfully deny. And yet Dr. Bailey knows and has often said, that that system is the worst of all, and that the national difficulties, and is of greater magnitude than any other national evil. Before it, all other wrongs do but sink into comparative insignificance. The election of Presidents and Senators by electors, and the election of Representatives by the people directly, in the Constitution, they could hardly be mentioned, so long as the monster evil of slavery is sanctioned by that fundamental law, and rules the nation. Why, then, cannot the *Era* propose amendments of such vital importance, and which would enable the nation to flourish and enjoy the smiles of prosperity under that Federal Compact. Then, why not propose them at once? We would not propose them, if we did not know that they were not only inapplicable and wrong, were it not that the *Era* is the only paper that has made so many thousands. The editor is now growing wealthy by the popularity of the paper, whose circulation is now second in extent to very few in the United States. Its influence in moulding public opinion is incalculable, and the presumption is, that the patrons of the paper are faithful approvers of the editor's sentiments and course. Not one of his thirty thousand readers, to our knowledge, has ever dissented from this position of the paper. It is, therefore, a safe measure for the amendment of here, other States may peacefully amend theirs, as some have done, and yet no one can have courage to propose an amendment to the Federal Constitution, which contains wrongs tenfold more ruinous to the country and to human liberty, and a thousand fold more wicked, than those parts which the *Era* proposes to amend.—*Conrad (O) Free Press*.

The clause of the Constitution relating to "slave representation," we do not regard as implying any sanction of slavery, or as securing any advantage to the South. On the contrary, it reduces the representation of every State holding slaves, in the ratio of two-fifths of that class of persons, thus making the existence of slavery reason for a partial political disability.

The provision of the Constitution in relation to the reapportionment of members of Congress, is, in our opinion, wrong in principle, and unsound in policy. It is repugnant to Freedom and Humanity; and, besides, viewed on the low ground of expediency, is of comparatively little service to the slaveholder, while it is a source of constant dissension and discord.

We are charged with "wrong and inconsistent" because, while proposing certain amendments of the Constitution, we say nothing of an amendment in respect to this provision. The *Free Press* should have asked an explanation, before passing sentence. There is no sectional interest arrayed against the amendments we propose, and they are clearly within the limits of possibility, if not probability. On the question of slavery, however, the States are equally divided. But it requires three-fourths (say twenty-three) of the States to insure the success of any amendment. It is necessary, therefore, to procure the assent of eight slave States, as well as that of all the free States, before an amendment abrogating the fugitive clause can be carried. This will be impracticable until these eight States (or more, should additional slave States meantime be erected) shall have abolished slavery. Instead, then, of proposing an impracticable measure, we shall continue to seek what is plainly attainable—submit such facts, arguments, and appeals to the public mind, as shall dispose it in favor of Emancipation. If the *Free Press* choose to labor for an amendment of the Constitution, we shall not find fault with it. It is not for us to dictate to others how they shall work in the field of reform. Every man must direct his blows where he thinks they will be most effectual; and we shall not presume to charge him with a want of wisdom, or of moral courage, or of consistency, because he does not hit where we do.

[As to the editor of the *Era* "growing wealthy by the popularity of his paper?" we wish it were

so—we could spend a fortune to the noblest purpose in this place. But, let not our friend be alarmed. We are in no danger of being swallowed up in the vortex of riches. A newspaper concern in Washington, without the benefit of Government advertisements, may be thankful if it can make out to sustain itself at all.

Finding that the *Era* did this, at the earliest moment we refunded with interest all the moneys that had been generously contributed to its establishment, so that they might be devoted to other objects connected with the Anti-Slavery cause; and, since then, have engaged contributors for its columns, which alone cost every year more, we presume, than the whole expense of printing the *Free Press* at the same time, including paper, editing, &c. We say this not invidiously, for the *Free Press* is an excellent paper, and is doing a good work, but if the patronage of the *Era* be liberal, its expenses are great; if its editor be favored with numerous readers, in return, he spends as much as he can afford to make the paper useful and agreeable to them, and an efficient advocate of the cause of Human Rights. The reader must judge these personal allusions. They are extorted from us by the remarks of the *Free Press*, and similar remarks in one or two other journals, calculated to convey erroneous impressions.]

MEDICAL QUACKERY—THE LAW OF PROGRESS.

WADSWORTH, OHIO, May 31, 1849.

To the Editor of the *National Era*:

I have always understood you to have been a regularly bred medical man; but if you are not, what I have to say will not be appropriate, and you will please lay it aside. If you do belong to the profession, it is in contempt on you to do nothing derogatory to the character of well-bred and courteous medical gentlemen; and, as well, as editor of the *Era*, you occupy another department of science, yet being known as a member of the Faculty, what you do or say, as editor, has an important bearing upon the character of the medical profession, of which you are, thus, to a certain extent, the representative and exponent. And hence it was, with pain, that I observed in *Franklin's* a reference to a Dr. Shaw, on Hydropathy, to be made to Dr. G. Bailey, jun., Washington city, and in the *Era* of the 24th instant, an editorial highly commendatory of it as a means of cure for "gallbladder complaint."

Now, when Quackery puts forth so many pretensions, it becomes the profession to stand aloof from all things which have a tendency to give "aid or encouragement" to it, for I regard it as professional "treason," as much as giving "aid and comfort" to an enemy in political treason. And I cannot help regarding the claims of Hydropathy to be as groundless as Homeopathy or Thompsonianism, or any other of the numerous species of Quackery with which our country is peculiarly infested. In proof, I have only room to refer you to a work written by a Dr. Shaw, on Hydropathy, in which he says it [i.e., Hydropathy] will cure all the curable diseases, and will greatly mitigate the invariable ones.

Is not that Quackery?

I am yours respectfully,
GEORGE K. PARKER, M. D.

Although "a regularly bred medical man," we have outlined (we hope) all our professional pride and prejudice. Every physician knows that there is too much quackery in the profession, as well as too much of it. It does not follow, that because a man has received a piece of parchment called a Diploma, from a regular College, that he is infallible in judgment or incapable of imposture; nor is the absence of such a Diploma, and the adoption of a different code of practice by other practitioners of the healing art, prima facie evidence of quackery. There are "regular" Doctors who repudiate calomel; others, who denounce bloodletting; others, who use the steam-bath and lobelia; others, who deal largely in cold water, or hydropathy; others, who have treated almost all ailments by constant purgation. Are they quacks?

The medical profession is not an exact science—it is founded upon observation and experiment, and therefore progressive. Its practice proceeds its science. The operation of external agents upon the system can be known only by observation. The virtues of some potent medicines have been revealed by accident. Analogy and experiment have led to the discovery of the powers of others. The "Materia Medica" is constantly receiving accessions in these modes.

The "regular" physician who understands anything about the foundation and growth of his art, will reject no remedy because it is new, or because it is recommended by one of the uninitiated, or one holding a different theory from himself. He knows too well his own ignorance of the real nature and cure of many diseases, he has learned too much of the insufficiency and uncertainty of the present stock of remedial agents, to reject lightly and without fair examination any new doctrine concerning diseases, any new remedy, with probable evidence in its favor. And he is too familiar with the illusions of imagination, the tricks of imposture, to accept new theories or specifics without subjecting them to the most rigid scrutiny.

Though "a regularly bred medical man," we belong to no school in medicine. We feel no sympathy with the esoteric and denunciation directed against the "regular physicians"; none with the haughty contempt manifested by them for new modes of practice. He who denies that the profession of medicine, as generally pursued hitherto, has contributed much to our knowledge of the laws of health, of the consequences of their violation, and of modes of preventing or curing disease, betrays more of the ignorance and self-sufficiency of the novice, than of the candid, enlightened spirit of the true reformer.

The investigations of the "regular faculty" have thrown light upon the predisposing causes of pestilential epidemics, and on the means adopted to abate their virulence and diminish the frequency of their recurrence; and tables of vital statistics show that their efforts, however imperfect, have still been greatly successful in lessening mortality.

On the other hand, the regular physician who indulges in contempt for the Eclectic, Hydropathic, Homeopathic, or Chrono-Thermal Schools, because they are not according to his gospel, shows more of the bigotry of Conservatism than of the philosophy of Progress. A magnanimous love of truth should lead him to examine into their claims with impartiality. If they can supply his lack of knowledge, if they can enable him to form a more correct theory of disease, if they can furnish him with additional remedial agents, preferable, or adjunct to those he is accustomed to use, why not avail himself of them? If the Homeopathist or Hydropathist yield himself up to the control of one idea, and assert for his particular system exclusive curative virtues, that is no reason why the "Allopathist" should shut himself up, too, in a narrow creed. If a man of an acute, active, and a liberal mind, he will even lay Quackery itself under contribution.

Coxe's Hive Syrup consists of several ingredients in certain proportions, and its efficacy in cases of sudden croup has been so frequently demonstrated, that the profession will admit of the omission of not a single ingredient, or the variation of a single proportion. The original compounder of it believed it a real specific for croup. Now, is there any theoretic or *a priori* reason why this mixture should be compounded of just such ingredients, in just such proportions, to secure the desired effect? The remedy is purely empirical. Again: No combination of opium, ipecacuanha, and sulphate of potash, will produce precisely the same effects as are produced by the combination known as Dover's powder. Can any theoretical reason be assigned for this? The remedy, we all know, is purely empirical. Why should not other mixtures or combinations be discovered (at times, even, by unprofessional men) of peculiar sanative virtues? When a physician finds a certain article, unknown to his *Materia Medica*, in frequent use among the "old women and quacks," if he chooses so to term them, his duty is to watch its effects, and ascertain whether it possesses the virtues ascribed to it. If careful observation and experiment conduct him to this conclusion, he is a traitor to his profession, should he refuse to make known the fact. The same remark will apply to what

are called quack medicines, so many of which are worse than powerless. In certain sections of the West, where fever and ague afflicts almost the whole population, there is a mixture known as *Osgood's Indian Chalmagee*, which it is attested by numerous competent witnesses, is more powerful in its remedial virtues, and less annoying, than Quinine in its pure form. If a physician, find, by repeated trials, in varied circumstances, that this peculiar mixture will more speedily and certainly cure fever and ague than his Quinine, and Quinine, why should he not use it? He knows its power in precisely the same way that he knows the potency of Quinine—but *Quinine* is the Chalmagee is an empirical remedy—*but* is it Dover's Powder—so is Coxe's Hive Syrup—so is Peruvian bark itself, whose virtues were first discovered by accident.

While we thus plead for liberality, common sense, for the first principles of the Healing Art, let us not be understood to sanction the mercenary practice of keeping secret the ingredients of the quack medicines sold throughout the country. *Osgood's Indian Chalmagee* is a peculiar combination, prepared, we understand, by a "regularly bred medical man," but its composition is kept a secret. This is the only objection to it, and it is one which, in ordinary cases, should condemn any combination. There may be extraordinary cases (and this certainly is one, as we happen to know) in which so conclusive is the evidence in favor of the great virtues of the compound, as to overcome this objection.

As to Hydropathy, it is a system of practice approved by many of the "regular faculty"; it is not adapted to all diseases, it is certainly powerfully remedial in many. There is no quackery in it, although there may be in those who claim that it is a panacea, just as the regular physician who purges for every disease, or resorts to venesection in every case, or relies always upon calomel, is guilty of quackery.

We conclude with the remark, that the profession of medicine must obey the Law of Progress, and that Hunkerism among physicians will fare no better than among politicians.

Let our friend give himself no uneasiness as to the effect of anything we may say on the "profession." We speak our own sentiments in our own way, and nobody is accountable for us. We do not belong to any body, individual or corporate.

THE BIGOTRY OF PARTY.

The editor of the *New York Tribune*, considering his liberal tendencies and affinities for Reform generally, is peculiarly under the control of the bigotry of party. The Catholic is scarcely more blindly devoted to his church than is the Whig party; and, where his prejudices are aroused, it seems almost impossible for him to do justice to opponents.

The following paragraph, from a bitter editorial on the results of the late elections, is anything but candid or philosophical:

"Slavery has given Locofocoism four members of Congress in Kentucky, with half the Convention, and an unusually large increase in the Legislature. So bring out your cannon, gentlemen of the Northern 'Free Democracy' and let the welkin ring again, for the frowns of a slaveholding Executive will not be potential in the next Congress. You cannot quite rejoice over the defeat in North Carolina of Edward Stanley, who voted against the Gag Rule, and against the Slavery Extension Resolutions passed by the late Legislature, (but how the *Free Soil* 'Globe' exults at his meager majority!) but you may exult that Aylett Buckner, who made the only and excellent Southern speech in Congress in favor of the Wilmot Proviso, has been elected by George A. Caldwell, a rabid Perpetualist and Extensionist, in a district Whig by 2,000 majority; that John P. Gaines, who introduced a bill last winter to abolish the slave trade in the District of Columbia, has been elected by George A. Caldwell, an avowed apostle of the 'Southern party,' while John C. Mason, ultra-slavery Locofoco, is elected in another strong Whig district, and Newton Lane, who also rode the Slavery high horse, has beaten Humphrey Marshall, an Abolitionist, in the Legislature. We mean that it will probably result in a Convention, that was about the last victory of that party in our State."

Alton, Illinois.

A CONVERT TO SLAVERY.

Solon Robinson, of Indiana, who writes very good agricultural articles for the newspapers, has been travelling in the South, and has become a convert to the blessedness of slavery. In a letter to the *Intelligencer*, he says:

"During my journey, I have had great opportunities to see negro slavery as it is, and am free to say, that all the objections I ever had to the institution must give way to the strong arguments of light and reason; that, at least to the negro, it is a blessing, and a blessing to our country. I could tell you facts about the situation of the three hundred slaves upon the plantation of Col. Wade Hampton, where I now write this, that would go to show the condition of these people to be almost inconceivably better than that of thousands of white freemen throughout all this region—the same class of people from whence Col. Gregg has drawn his factory operatives, because they are found to be cheaper than blacks; and, for an obvious reason, there are no children, old, sick, or infirm, to be supported. They are free, which also means free to starve, if unable to work; while the slave is always provided for at his master's expense."

In Holy Writ it is recorded that "Man shall not live by bread alone." This modern Solon thinks differently. In his philosophy, a good stomach, enough to fill it, and plenty of work, constitute the beatitudes of manhood. Col. Wade Hampton's horses, and asses, and oxen, we doubt not, enjoy these same blessings; for the merciful man is merciful to his beast—and, of course, the condition of these creatures "is inconceivably better than that of thousands of white freemen" throughout all this region.

It is the general impression that man has a soul as well as body; that he has a will, an understanding, a conscience, a great variety of affections; and we rather think, that if our modern "Solon" had to choose between a perpetually fettered will, a degraded understanding, a blighted conscience, and crushed affections, with a full belly, on one side, and an unrestrained will, an educated understanding, an enlightened conscience, and gratified affections, with the risk of starvation, on the other, he would be strongly tempted to choose the latter. But he might reply—there is no hope for the poor freeman in South Carolina, either *spiritually or carnally*. He suffers alike from mental and bodily starvation. True—and it is this infernal system which our new convert to slavery eulogizes, which inflicts such starvation. Does he not know that the system of slavery labor will not admit of the employment of free labor? What, then, has a white man, who cannot buy land and negroes, to do, but to starve or run away? And while it thus wars upon the poor "freemen," withholding from them bread and books, bodily and mental sustenance, it places the slaves upon precisely the same level with beasts of burden, supplying their animal wants, and providing them shelter, regarding them, however, not as men, but as mere instruments of production! Does not every merciful man treat his horse kindly—feed him well—discipline him with love—to see him fat and sleek, with glossy hide, and elastic tread? Does he not boast of his strength, his gentleness, his docility?

The great mistake of Mr. Solon Robinson is, that he has not yet learned to distinguish between a man and a horse.

TURNING LOOSE.

"Here we have presented evidence which we think are entitled to consideration, that we may not hope for aid in this emancipation movement from the South, as they will have their gates against us shut, if we make them any more than at all, keep them in our midst or send them to Liberia. The scheme of colonization in Liberia, says the *National Era*, will certainly prove a failure, as there is a man in Kentucky who is willing to turn loose upon the State two hundred thousand free negroes! Look at it as we will, that is the true and only question."—*Frankfort Commonwealth*.

Is there a man in Kentucky who does not see that he is more danger in turning loose two hundred slaves than the same number of free negroes? It is amusing to hear the opponents of emancipation talking all the while as if their slaves were shut up in a menagerie, or going about handcuffed, yoked in a team, or tethered. Why, the slaves have been turned loose in Kentucky from the time when the forest first echoed the crack of old Boone's rifle; they are running at large every day. Suppose them *free*, instead of *bond*, where would be the difference? What harm could happen? Now, they feel a sense of wrong and degradation, and, being "turned loose" all the while, may be tempted at times to acts of revenge; and they will not work unless looked after. Then, being free, they would have no wrong to complain of, no motive to revenge, but the strongest motive in the world to work well, with out oversight—that is, the necessity of supporting themselves.

"Turn loose upon the State two hundred thousand free negroes!" This is an unfair presentation of the question. Two hundred thousand men are "turned loose" upon the State of Kentucky, with all the ignorance, and degradation, and dangerous passions engendered by slavery; the question is, not whether you will turn them loose, but whether you will continue them *slaves*, and therefore hostile to the State, or make them *men*, and thereby convert them into friends?

RESTRAINT ON MARRIAGE.

The *Buffalo Republic* gives an account of a singular case which lately came before the Pennsylvania courts. A gentleman died, leaving his estate to his wife, on condition that she should not marry again. Rebellious against the condition, she appealed to the Court, and the Hon. Ellis Lewis presiding, annulled the condition. The case went up to the Supreme Court, and Judge Gibson thus rudely reversed the decision:

"I know of no policy on which such a point could be rested, except the policy, which, for the sake of a division of labor, would make one man maintain the children begotten by another. It would be extremely difficult to say why a husband should not leave a homestead to his wife, without being compelled to share it with a succession of her children, or to use it as a nest to hatch a brood of strangers to his blood."

Suppose the wife had brought the penniless husband the personal property that bought this very homestead, what then? It is just, we suppose, that he should not only take from her her property in his marriage, but prevent her from using it at her own discretion, after his death! Or, supposing that, by her frugality and intelligent enterprise, she had enabled him to procure this homestead, what then? Has not the woman as much interest in the children she has borne, as the man, who has begotten them? A woman of large personal property marries a landless husband, who uses her money to buy land. They have children—the dies—he marries, has children by another wife, a brood of strangers to the blood of the deceased, but the law has not a word to say against sharing her property with the successor to her bed!

It is well that Love is powerful enough to mitigate, and sometimes to prevent, the base injustice to woman which the Law allows.

IRREGULARITIES OF THE MAIL.

We noticed an article in the *Intelligencer*, the other day, on the subject of the irregularities of the newspaper mail, excusing the Post Office Department and all its agents, and laying the blame generally upon publishers. Publishers, it is said, have their papers bagged in their own offices, and, owing to the carelessness of their clerks, packages get into the wrong bags. Thus, a package for Roxbury, Mass., may be thrown into a bag for the West.

We are not in the habit of finding fault with the Post Office Department. During the last Administration, it often found in us a defender against what we deemed unreasonable complaints, and we shall occupy a similar position in relation to it during the present Administration. It is a Department of the Government that ought to have nothing to do with politics, and should be exempt from partisan warfare. It is a great Public Convenience, and every aid should be given by all parties to those engaged in administering it. The reasonable presumption is, that the Postmaster General and his deputies will always do their best to satisfy public expectation; and if they fail, it is but fair, in the absence of proof to the contrary, to attribute the failure to causes beyond their control. So vast and complicated is the Department, so many thousands miles must the mails be transported, by such a variety of conveyances, over such a variety of routes, so many contractors must be employed, through so many hands must the mail matter pass, to such vicissitudes and accidents is it constantly exposed, and so difficult is it to trace immediately every set of mismanagement or carelessness to its proper source, and provide a remedy for it, that the only wonder is that letters and newspapers reach their places of destination with so much regularity.

But, where irregularities do occur, it is not reasonable to presume, without proof, that the publishers of newspapers are in fault. Such irregularities are far more injurious to them than to any individuals concerned in transporting or distributing mail matter. Their subscription lists inevitably suffer, for people are apt to lose their interest in any periodical which fails one-half the time. The strongest pecuniary consideration constantly urges them to the greatest care in the mailing department of their papers, and no one has ever yet dreamed that individuals were not in the habit of securing generally even better clerks than the Government. Should a mail bag, however, be thrown aside and delayed, to make room for something else, once in a while, the driver or agent is not directly and personally injured; or, should there be occasional delay in forwarding certain packages from a distributing office, or a mistake in sending them on a wrong route, or a misreading of the address, for want of attention, the clerks in the Post Office do not suffer. They may generally be relied upon to do their duty; but, from the nature of the case, the publishers of newspapers have far stronger *selfish* motives for the avoidance of mistakes.

That for some time past there has been an increase of mail irregularities, there can be no doubt. The experience of every publisher, we presume, will furnish proof of this. But we have not complained, because they were to be expected from the numerous changes that have taken place lately in the carriers of the mail, in the deputy postmasters, and of their dependents. But the new men will soon acquire, by attention and experience, habits of accuracy and fidelity. It takes an American but a short time to learn his duties in any station. We have no doubt that the ponderous machinery of mail carrying and distributing will soon work as smoothly as ever.

For one, we cherish a kindly feeling towards postmasters. The relation between them and publishers ought to be of the most amicable kind, for the larger the circulation of the latter, the better for the former; and the more faithful and friendly the former, the greater the chances of the latter for a large circulation. Let them, therefore,

"Be to each other's faults a little blind,
And to each other's virtues very kind."

ELECTION BY THE PEOPLE.

We have from time to time urged the expediency of the election of Postmasters by the People, instead of their appointment by the Postmaster General. In addition to the views already presented, let us submit another.

There are seventeen thousand deputy postmasters in the United States. On every change of Administration, it is a fair presumption that changes will be sought in a great majority of these—say, in twelve thousand. On an average, we may calculate at least five applicants for every one of these offices—or an aggregate of sixty thousand applications. But each applicant has his vouchers, his letters, his memorials; and then there are counter memorials. It is not too much to assume, that, for every application, on an average, there are five papers or documents connected with it. Here, then, are three hundred thousand papers, letters, or documents, submitted to the Postmaster General, and it is supposed that he must examine every one, so as to do justice to the parties concerned. Now, let us calculate that two minutes will be sufficient for the examination of each of these papers, and it will require six hundred thousand minutes for one man to wade through the whole. Suppose, then, he devote to this business every day till it be finished, computing ten hours as a fair day's work. Spending, then, six hundred minutes every day at this work of examination and nothing else, he will have read all these papers in one thousand days, or, allowing for Sundays, in three years, two months, and four days!

And yet, people sometimes wonder that they do not receive answers to their applications! Do they not see that it is impossible for the Postmaster General even to look at all the papers, much less reply to them? Do they not see how much must, from the necessity of the case, be left to

subordinates in the Department? Do they not see what little chance there is that the real sentiments of the people of a district shall be consulted, or that imposition shall be avoided? The Postmaster General is not in fault so much as the system, which imposes upon him duties which no one man can perform.

The remedy is easy: let the deputy postmasters be elected by the People, liable to removal by the Postmaster General for incompetence or dishonesty.

BISSETTE OF MARTINIQUE.

Twenty-five years ago there lived at St. Pierre, in the island of Martinique, a young man of color, named Bissette. He was noted for his intelligence and worth, and exercised no small degree of influence among the free blacks of the island.

About this time, a pamphlet on the condition of the people of color in the French Colonies was printed in Paris, and copies of it were sent to Martinique and Guadeloupe. On the 12th of the 12th month, one Merando, an agent of the Procureur du Roi for Martinique, looking through the jalousie window of Bissette's house, saw copies of this pamphlet on his table. He hastened to the Procureur, and on his report that functionary repaired to the house of Bissette, whom he arrested on the charge of conspiracy to overthrow the Colonial Government. The discovery of two copies of the obnoxious pamphlet in Bissette's house, and of several others in the hands of free colored men, was deemed ample ground for charging the principal and leading men of color with the design of rising against the whites. Some two hundred were arrested, and banished from the island. Some were sent to the burning deserts of Senegal, while others were allowed to go to France. Bissette was sentenced to the punishment of branding and hard labor for life. This sentence was commuted to banishment for life by the tribunal of Fort Royal. The Procureur entered an appeal from this judgment, as did also Bissette and his fellow-prisoners. The King had in the mean time appointed a new Procureur, who was already on his passage out, when the acting Procureur, contrary to rule and justice, insisted upon pressing the appeal. The trial was a burlesque on judicial procedure. The accused were neither allowed to produce evidence in their defense, nor to avail themselves of the aid of legal counsellors and defenders. The court sat with closed doors. Bissette was declared guilty of distributing seditious pamphlets, and the original sentence was reaffirmed. The Governor made strenuous efforts for a delay in the execution of the sentence, but they proved unavailing against the prejudices and fears of the white planters. The horrible punishment of branding with a hot iron was inflicted upon Bissette and his friends Volay and Fabien. They were then sent to Guadeloupe, without being permitted to see their wives and children, from whom they had been separated for three years. The energetic spirit of Bissette defied the means of bringing their case before the Court of Cassation at Paris. Here the colonial decision was reversed, and they were set at liberty.

Bissette, who, like Oge of St. Domingo, had commenced his public life as the advocate only of the rights of free men of color, had learned during three years of suffering that his own class could not be safe from the suspicions, prejudices, and insults of the whites, so long as the latter continued to hold his brethren by birth and complexion as slaves. He felt that the men of color, bond and free, were united in a common destiny. Acting upon this conviction, he began the work of agitation in the French capital in behalf of emancipation in the Colonies. He established a periodical devoted to the subject, wherein he exposed the atrocities of the slave system, and combated with force and ingenuity the falsehood and sophistry of its advocates. He corresponded with the friends of his oppressed race in England and the United States, and was one of the founders of the French Abolition Society, of which the late Duke de Broglie was the first President, and which included among its members and patrons such men as Isambert, Passy, La Rochefoucauld, Crémieux, and Lamartine.

The two latter were members of the Provisional Government established by the Revolution which dethroned Louis Philippe. One of the first acts of that Government was the virtual abolition of slavery. In the 10th month following, Bissette received the notice of his election by the people of Martinique and Guadeloupe as one of their representatives to the National Assembly, but, owing to some irregularity in the election, and certain constitutional disqualifications under which he labored, he gave in his resignation, with the intention of again placing himself fairly before the people for reelection. With this view he is now on a visit to his native island—the scene of his long imprisonment and of his cruel and ignominious punishment. On the 21st of the 6th month, the ship *Zampa* was signalled off Precher point, near St. Pierre. It was known that Bissette was on board, and the population, irrespective of color and rank, came out to receive him. Shouts, songs, and music, were heard in all the streets. The exile of twenty-five years landed amidst universal acclamations; a carriage was brought to the landing place, into which he was lifted, and drawn by the populace to the doors of the splendid mansion which had been richly furnished for his reception. The *Martinique Courier* of the 21st says:

"Mr. Bissette has been, during the long days he has passed in St. Pierre, the object of idolatry. Nothing can give an idea of the enthusiasm inspired by his presence wherever he has shown himself—along the streets, as he proceeds upon business, or as he moves to make visits—or at his residence, where a familiar reception is given to every call. He is the guest of honor at all the great day. Numerous deputations have complimented Mr. Bissette, and many addresses have been presented to him."

Among these, we notice one addressed to him by a distinguished merchant of St. Pierre, in which allusion was made to his early sufferings in the cause of freedom, and his faithful labors in the same cause during his long exile. We subjoin his modest and well-expressed answer, as, in some sort an electioneering speech of a black candidate for the National Assembly of France, it is not without interest; and we think the most prejudiced will admit that it compares favorably with the stump oratory of General Cullum, an unmistakable Anglo-Saxon candidate for Congress, at the late election in Tennessee, a specimen of which has appeared in our columns:

"Citizens! After an absence of twenty-five years, it is impossible to be more happy than I am, on finding myself in the midst of my countrymen whom I love, and who are for so many reasons dear to me."

"I am not the less moved by your fraternal welcome. Accept the testimony of my warmest thanks and gratitude."

"Certainly, I had thought I could anticipate the eagerness which would have brought before me those friends with whom I have been for many a long year in communion of ideas and sentiments; but this almost unanimous concert of the inhabitants of your city surpasses my utmost expectation; and, if I am overjoyed at this, and feel honored; I do not deceive myself, neither do I labor under an illusion as to the value of this manifestation of your sympathies. I too well know what I am, and what I am to be, and that it is my personal merit which you recompense at this moment by this kind of ovation; you come to give your adhesion here to those words of peace, union, concord, and conciliation, which proceeded from my mouth and Carol in the grand hall of the Chamber as the expression of a common sentiment; you come to bear testimony that I was but the organ, the faithful interpreter of your wishes, and that we ardently desire the union of the generous spirits of all parties as the sole pledge of the prosperity of our dear Martinique."

"It is thus, citizens and countrymen, that I account to myself for the flattering reception of which I am the object. Let us, therefore, consent to a mutual oblivion of the past, and cast away unhappy divisions, old prejudices of a bygone day, and recriminations which can never promote the welfare of parties, still less the happiness of the country, which should resign over and tranquillize all passions."

"As to those sufferings to which you have made allusion, they were never very painful to me; for, even at the depth of my dungeon, they long since formed for me an habitual chain, of which I

never felt the weight; they were the inevitable consequence of our social regeneration.

"Vive la République!"

No doubt whatever is expressed of his triumphant reelection to the National Assembly. Of his ability and integrity in the discharge of the duty thereby imposed on him, his constituents have ample guaranty in his past life and character.

